

Championing Safety Culture at Shepherd Hardware

OWNERS IN ACTION

JAMES BYERS SHEPHERD HARDWARE
THREE OAKS, MICHIGAN



In a recent discussion, Ken Buffinga, General Manager of Shepherd Hardware, spoke highly of James Byers for his significant impact on the company's safety culture. Initially hired as a Process Champion in 2022, James was promoted to Environment, Health, and Safety Coordinator in 2024, where he embraced the challenge of improving safety protocols.

According to Rubin Clarett, Operations Manager, James quickly demonstrated his value by immersing himself in the business, learning every department's processes, and building strong relationships across teams. One of his first initiatives was creating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for critical processes that previously lacked documentation.

As James took on more safety projects, he earned the team's trust through collaboration and a genuine, team-focused mindset. He established meaningful monthly safety meetings and implemented additional small team safety meetings that encouraged employee feedback, idea-sharing, and willingness for employees to voice concerns. He also actively involved team members in safety initiatives, establishing a participatory approach that redefined the department's goals and mindset.

Thanks to his efforts, Shepherd Hardware saw remarkable improvements in its recent Safety Audit. Ken and Rubin both agree that James has been instrumental in fostering a safer, more collaborative workplace. ■

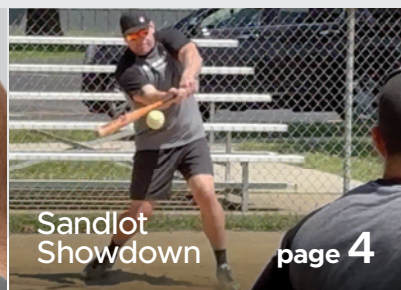
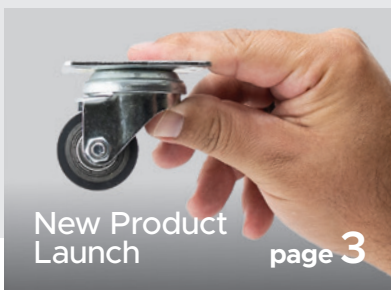
CEO Corner Rich Kobor, Colson Group CEO



Looking Back and Looking Ahead

As we near the end of this year and approach the upcoming holidays, I am grateful for progress we have made together. We have invested in facilities, improved processes, filled key positions, and completed two strategic acquisitions of Parker & Bailey and Forearm Forklift in the retail space. We're also investing in our Caster sales team with an upcoming on-site workshop with a world-class sales training group.

Our recent employee ownership survey had some incredible results with improved participation, engagement, and scores. We've built a strong foundation, and with your continued passion and focus, we'll achieve even greater success. Let's stay focused, stay hungry, and make next year our best yet.



Summer Interns Gain Hands On Experience at Colson

This past summer, we had the privilege to host a number of interns at different Colson Group facilities. It was exciting to have the opportunity to invest in young professionals and help get them started pursuing their careers. Here are just a few of our interns that we wanted to highlight.



Chase Gibson

Degree Program:
Finance

Department:
Supply Chain

Graduating: May 2025
Hometown: Cabot, AR



Skylar Jensen

Degree Program:
Business Administration

Department:
Accounts Receivable

Graduated: May 2024
Hometown: Norfolk, AR



John Lindner

Degree Program:
Mechanical Engineering

Department:
Product Engineering

Graduating: Dec 2024
Hometown: Midlothian, TX



Sonia Komdeur

Degree Program:
Digital Marketing

Department:
Marketing

Graduating: May 2027
Hometown: St. Joseph, MI

What are three things that you liked most about your time with Colson?

1. The teamwork between all the departments.
2. Having a good mix of team and individual tasks.
3. Flexibility that worked with my school schedule.

1. That it feels like a family
2. The flexibility
3. Getting to experience new challenges

1. Improving my industry software skills.
2. Learning about the design process.
3. Seeing how my work improved operations.

1. My awesome coworkers
2. Knowing I was making a difference every day
3. Learning new skills from a wide range of projects.

Employee Ownership Survey

Thank you to everyone who participated in our recent Employee Ownership Survey! Your engagement and feedback are invaluable in helping us understand your perspectives and continue building a strong, collaborative workplace. We had a high level of response and are currently reviewing the results. Follow-up listening sessions are being held at each facility and we will share key findings and insights in an upcoming newsletter. Stay tuned, and thank you again for your time and contribution to this important initiative!

HR UPDATE

Colson Group and Shepherd Hardware Welcome New Leadership



Colson Group is pleased to welcome Adam Bitner as our new Vice President of Sales. Adam is a graduate of Texas A&M University with over 20 years of experience in sales, management, and leadership roles. Adam brings a wealth of expertise in driving growth, building strong partnerships, and leading high-performing teams. At Sullair, Adam played a pivotal role in growing the distribution business and driving performance across the organization.

One of Adam's initial responsibilities will be to drive new sales growth, particularly in the material handling distribution space. Known for his integrity, professionalism, and clear communication, Adam thrives on creating win-win solutions for stakeholders with varying objectives. Adam's approach has helped him navigate complex business challenges and consistently deliver results.

Shepherd Hardware is happy to announce the addition of Christian Rudeen as Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing.

Bringing a wealth of expertise and a data-driven approach from his time as a Senior Sales Director at 3M, Christian is poised to elevate Shepherd Hardware's sales strategies and enhance the company's global reach. His leadership will be pivotal as he spearheads aligning product innovations with customer needs worldwide.

Christians initial responsibilities will be to drive sales growth through Home Depot retail stores, e-commerce with our retail customers, and direct to consumer. With Christian's analytical insight and dedication to strategic growth, Shepherd Hardware anticipates significant advancements in expanding its product offerings and achieving new levels of market success. ■

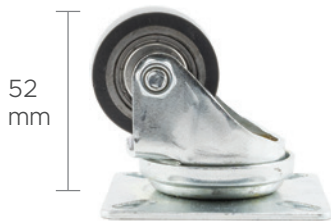


New Product Announcement:

INTRODUCING THE COLSON M2 SERIES MEGA MITE

POWERFUL PERFORMANCE IN A COMPACT PROFILE

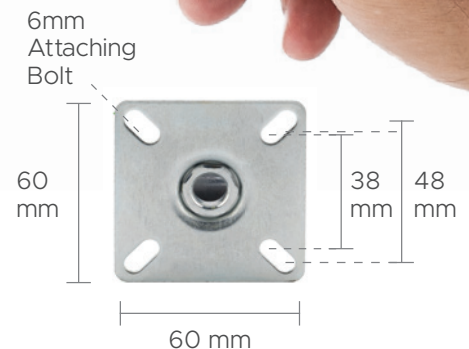
The industrial grade kingpin, poured urethane wheel, and precision bearing empower this tiny titan to roll smoothly and easily, even under the heaviest loads.



**Incredibly Low
Mounting Height**



**250 lb. Max Load
Capacity per Caster**



**Industrial Grade
Build Construction**

Part Number	Wheel Size	Description	Capacity	Top Plate	Load Height	Swivel Radius
M2.3302.938	35 mm	Swivel	250 lbs.	60 x 60 mm	52 mm	32.5 mm



Softball Showdown Sparks Team Spirit



Regional Operations Manager and Tournament Official, Rubin, photobombs the “winning” Hawthorne team during celebrations.

“Undefeated Champion” Crowned at Tournament That Never Officially Finished

Chaos, camaraderie, and a suspiciously-timed haircut turned this year’s “Caster Classic” softball tournament into Colson Group’s most dramatic 2024 event. Organized by self-appointed Softball Czars Kelly Lesosky and Hayden Huscher, the tournament promised cutthroat competition but instead delivered enough absurdity for an HBO mini-series.

Held at Eaton Park, teams from the Michigan facilities of Hawthorne, Kerth, Three Oaks, and Albion arrived with dreams of glory. Families cheered wildly, and Diana’s Soul Food Kitchen food truck quickly became the real MVP, dishing out three-meat baked potatoes with a side of side-eye at every dramatic play. Hawthorne bested Kerth and Albion in early matchups, though not without controversy. “Their shortstop’s cleats looked suspiciously like CG-MAX skates,” grumbled a defeated player, whose identity remains anonymous to avoid water cooler drama.

Then came the twist: Rubin, our Regional Operations Manager, and apparent judge, jury, and executioner of tournament scheduling, abandoned ship mid-event to “go get a haircut.” Without Rubin to maintain order, chaos ensued. Hawthorne, with an undefeated record, crowned themselves champions. Albion, winners of the consolation bracket, graciously accepted second place.

The day culminated in a presentation starring Cal from Albion, who awarded modestly-sized trophies fabricated at the Albion plant to the “winning” team. “I expected something as heavy as my car,” noted a bewildered Hawthorne player. Despite the mayhem, Kelly and Hayden have since announced plans to make the tournament an annual event. “Next year, we’re implementing stricter rules,” declared Kelly. “No mid-game haircuts, no wheeled cleats, and definitely no self-declared champions.”

For all its chaos, the Caster Classic brought employees and families together in camaraderie and sportsmanship. ■



The Albion Raiders from Albion, Michigan



The Hawthorne Hustle & Throw from St. Joseph, Michigan



The Kerth Wheelers from St. Joseph, Michigan



The Shepherd Sliders from Three Oaks, Michigan